

## IN THE CLAIMS

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of playing a wagering game with playing cards in which a dealer competes against a player, the game comprising:

at least one player placing a wager on the game;

the at least one player and the dealer each receiving a single card with a rank from a set of cards to form an at least one player hand and a dealer hand;

the at least one player taking at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card attempting to receive a first ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the at least one player hand, the specific relationship being selected from the group consisting of cards being sequentially higher in rank and sequentially lower in rank;

if the at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card has the specific relationship in rank to the single card, or if the at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card allows the at least one player to continue the game ~~according to rules of play of the wagering game,~~ the player exercises an option of taking another ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card or standing, attempting to receive another ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the first ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card;

when the player has elected to take no more ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards or has taken a maximum number of ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards allowed, ~~according to the rules of play of the wagering game attempting again to receive successive additional cards having the specific relationship to a previous additional card,~~ but has not taken a card that busts the at least one player's hand by not having the specific relationship to the previous additional card, the dealer takes at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card attempting to receive a first ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the dealer's hand, the dealer taking ~~[[hit]]~~ additional cards attempting again to receive successive additional cards having the specific relationship to a previous additional card until the dealer busts by not having the specific relationship to the previous additional card ~~according to the rules of play of the wagering game,~~ until the dealer has taken a maximum number of ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards allowed ~~according to the rules of play of the wagering game,~~ or until the dealer has received a total number of cards that exceeds the total number of cards in all players' hands in the game; and resolving the wager on the game.

2. (CANCELLED)

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1 wherein the specific relationship in rank is that ~~[[a hit]]~~ an additional card has a rank that is less than the rank of the previous card received in the hand.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 2~~ A method of playing a wagering game with playing cards in which a dealer competes against a player, the game comprising:

at least one player placing a wager on the game;  
the at least one player and the dealer each receiving a single card with a rank from a set of cards to form an at least one player hand and a dealer hand;  
the at least one player taking at least one mandatory additional card attempting to receive a first additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the at least one player hand, the specific relationship being selected from the group consisting of cards being sequentially higher in rank and sequentially lower in rank;  
if the at least one mandatory additional card has the specific relationship in rank to the single card, or if the at least one mandatory additional card allows the at least one player to continue the game, the player exercises an option of taking another additional card or standing, attempting to receive another additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the first additional card;  
when the player has elected to take no more additional cards or has taken a maximum number of additional cards allowed, attempting again to receive successive additional cards having the specific relationship to a previous additional card, but has not taken a card that busts the at least one player's hand by not having the specific relationship to the previous additional card, the dealer takes at least one mandatory additional card attempting to receive a first additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the dealer's hand, the dealer taking additional cards attempting again to receive successive additional cards having the specific relationship to a previous additional card until the dealer busts by not having the specific relationship to the previous additional card, until the dealer has taken a maximum number of additional cards allowed, or until the dealer has received a total number of cards that exceeds the total number of cards in all players' hands in the game; and

resolving the wager on the game;

wherein the specific relationship in rank is that an additional card exceeds the rank of the previous card received in the hand receiving an additional card, and

wherein if ~~[[a hit]]~~ an additional card matches the rank of the previous card received in either a player hand or dealer hand, that player hand or dealer hand remains active in play of the wagering game and that player hand or dealer hand automatically receives another ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card that cannot bust the hand.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 3~~ A method of playing a wagering game with playing cards in which a dealer competes against a player, the game comprising:

at least one player placing a wager on the game;

the at least one player and the dealer each receiving a single card with a rank from a set of cards to form an at least one player hand and a dealer hand;

the at least one player taking at least one mandatory additional card attempting to receive a first additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the at least one player hand, the specific relationship being selected from the group consisting of cards being sequentially higher in rank and sequentially lower in rank;

if the at least one mandatory additional card has the specific relationship in rank to the single card, or if the at least one mandatory additional card allows the at least one player to continue the game, the player exercises an option of taking another additional card or standing, attempting to receive another additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the first additional card;

when the player has elected to take no more additional cards or has taken a maximum number of additional cards allowed, attempting again to receive successive additional cards having the specific relationship to a previous additional card, but has not taken a card that busts the at least one player's hand by not having the specific relationship to the previous additional card, the dealer takes at least one mandatory additional card attempting to receive a first additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the dealer's hand, the dealer taking additional cards attempting again to receive successive additional cards having the specific relationship to a previous additional card until the dealer busts by not having the specific relationship to the previous additional card, until the dealer has taken a maximum number of additional

cards allowed, or until the dealer has received a total number of cards that exceeds the total number of cards in all players' hands in the game; and

resolving the wager on the game;

wherein the specific relationship in rank is that an additional card has a rank that is less than the rank of the previous card received in the hand; and

wherein if ~~[[a hit]]~~ an additional card matches the rank of the previous card received in either a player hand or dealer hand, that player hand or dealer hand remains active in play of the wagering game and that player hand or dealer hand automatically receives another ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card that cannot bust the hand.

6. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 2 wherein if the mandatory card is lower than the first card by a value difference of 3 or less, the player does not bust, but remains as a 2-card hand without the benefit of continued drawing.

7. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 3 wherein if the mandatory card is higher than the first card by a value difference of 3 or less, the player does not bust, but remains as a 2-card hand without the benefit of continued drawing.

8. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 2 wherein if the single card of the dealer has a specific rank, the player is allowed to double the wager on the game.

9. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 3 wherein if the single card of the dealer has a specific rank, the player is allowed to double the wager on the game.

10. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 2 wherein if the single card of the dealer has a specific rank, the player is allowed to triple the wager on the game.

11. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 3 wherein if the single card of the dealer has a specific rank, the player is allowed to triple the wager on the game.

12. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1 wherein resolving the wager comprises multiplying the wager by a factor related to a difference in number of cards between the at least one player's hand and the dealer's hand.

13. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 2 wherein resolving the wager comprises multiplying the wager by a factor related to a difference in number of cards between the at least one player's hand and the dealer's hand.

14. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 3 wherein resolving the wager comprises multiplying the wager by a factor related to a difference in number of cards between the at least one player's hand and the dealer's hand.

15. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 4 wherein resolving the wager comprises multiplying the wager by a factor related to a difference in number of cards between the at least one player's hand and the dealer's hand.

16. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 5 wherein resolving the wager comprises multiplying the wager by a factor related to a difference in number of cards between the at least one player's hand and the dealer's hand.

17. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 2 wherein the maximum number of cards equals six cards.

18. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 3 wherein the maximum number of cards equals six cards.

19. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 2 wherein the dealer must continue taking ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards until the dealer hand busts, but the dealer hand is in play for a number of cards attained before busting.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 3 wherein the dealer must continue taking hits ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards until the dealer hand busts, but the dealer hand is in play for a number of cards attained before busting.

21. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1 wherein cards are provided to the at least one player and the dealer as virtual cards on a display.

22. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1 played on a video gaming apparatus with a single player, wherein cards are provided to the at least one player and the dealer as virtual cards on a display.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of playing a wagering game with playing cards in which a dealer competes against a player, the game comprising:

at least one player placing a wager on the game;

the at least one player and the dealer receiving a single card with a rank from a set of cards to form an at least one player hand and a dealer hand;

the at least one player taking at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card attempting to receive a first ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the at least one player hand, the specific relationship in rank being selected from the group consisting of cards being sequentially higher in rank and sequentially lower in rank;

if the at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card has the specific relationship in rank to the single card, or if the at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card allows the at least one player to continue the game ~~[[according to rules of play of the wagering game]]~~, the player having the option of taking another ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card, attempting to receive another ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the first ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card;

when the player has elected to take no more ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards or has taken a maximum number of hits ~~[[according to the rules of play of the wagering game]]~~, but has not taken a card that busts the at least one player's hand by not having the specific relationship to the previous additional card, the dealer taking at least one mandatory ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card attempting to receive a first ~~[[hit]]~~ additional card having a specific relationship in rank to the single card in the dealer hand, the dealer taking ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards until the dealer busts ~~[[according to the rules of play of the wagering game]]~~, the dealer card count being a number less than the total cards received including the bust card; and

resolving the wager on the game.

24. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 2 wherein a maximum number of cards that any player hand or dealer hand may receive is seven cards.

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 3 ~~[[whereina]]~~ wherein a maximum number of cards that any player hand or dealer hand may receive is seven cards.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 2 wherein the dealer must continue taking ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards until the dealer hand busts or exceeds the total number of ~~[[cards in each player's]]~~ cards in each player's hand, and the dealer hand is in play for a total number of cards in the dealer's hand attained before busting.

27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 2 wherein the dealer must continue taking ~~[[hits]]~~ additional cards until the dealer hand busts or exceeds the total number of ~~[[cards in each player's]]~~ cards in each player's hand, and the dealer hand is in play for a total number of cards in the dealer's hand attained before busting.

28. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 24 wherein a bonus amount may be won by a player for receiving a predetermined number of cards in the player's hand without busting.

29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 25 wherein a bonus amount may be won ~~[[bya]]~~ by a player for receiving a predetermined number of cards in the player's hand without busting.

30. (NEW) The method of claim 1 wherein the specific relationship in rank is that an additional card has a rank that is higher then the rank of the previous card received in the hand.

31. (NEW) The method of claim 30 wherein if the mandatory card matches suit with the single card, the player does not bust, and the player may continue drawing or not continue drawing additional cards.

32. (NEW) The method of claim 3 wherein if the mandatory card matches suit with the single card, the player does not bust, and the player may continue drawing or not continue drawing additional cards.